

CHOU EN-LAI ENDS AFRICAN TOUR

Chou En-lai wound up his long African safari on 4 February without having scored any startling immediate gains. His only diplomatic plum was Tunisia's agreement to receive a Chinese Communist ambassador; he may also see a prospect that some of the African nations now recognizing Nationalist China may in time follow the French lead in establishing relations with Peiping.

The Chinese Communist premier's seven-week foray into ten African capitals may have helped prepare the way for future advances, however, and probably should be regarded as an over-all success. He made a favorable impression almost everywhere he went, and his personal charm has probably done much to increase respect for Peiping among his hosts.

The generally cautious and conciliatory tenor of Chou's approach was calculated to win over moderate Africans newly come to power and alarmed by Peiping's militant backing of violent revolution. His persistent efforts to present Chinese and African interests as identical seem likely to increase support for China at the next Afro-Asian conference.

Chou's only serious mistake was in Guinea when--reportedly ignoring President Touré's wishes--he included a bitter attack on the US and a pledge of "full support" for Panama in a live radiobroadcast.

Last-minute cancellations by Tanganyika, Kenya, and Uganda prevented Chou from exercising his personal diplomacy in these recently independent nations. Lead-

ers of all three states apparently suspected Peiping of abetting the revolt in Zanzibar and the mutiny in Tanganyika.

The stigma of possible involvement in these uprisings did not stop Sudan, Ethiopia, and the Somali Republic from receiving Chou, but his visits were not unqualified successes.

The final communiqué issued in Ethiopia referred only to "normalization" of relations in the "near future," although the Ethiopians have been moving toward formal diplomatic ties with Peiping in recent weeks. Haile Selassie may have put off Chou's pressure for immediate recognition pending an assessment of the Chinese visit to Somalia--a state with which the Ethiopians have long been at odds.

Little is known concerning Chou's contacts with leaders in Somalia and Sudan, but the final communiqués contained no surprises. The Chinese carefully avoided endorsement of Somalia's territorial claims on neighboring Ethiopia and Kenya.

Chou and his traveling companion, Foreign Minister Chen Yi, had been scheduled to stop in Pakistan, Ceylon, and Burma on the way home. Cancellation of the three visits in East Africa upset the itinerary, however, and the Chinese have returned to Peiping before setting out again for South Asia in mid-February. The interval will provide an opportunity to discuss with other leaders impressions gained in Africa and the impact there of French recognition.

TOP SECRET

